

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/015,423

Applicant(s)

SANSONE, RONALD

Examiner

James A. Reagan

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the Terminal Disclaimer filed on 28 February 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-5 and 12-17.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 21 December 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This action is in response to the Terminal Disclaimer filed on 28 February 2005.
2. Claims 1-17 have been examined.
3. Claims 6-11 are cancelled by Examiner's amendment.
4. Claims 1-5 and 12-17 are allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-5 and 12-17 are allowed. See Reasons for Allowance under separate heading.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

6. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
7. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with RONALD REICHMAN on 28 March 2005.

8. The application has been amended as follows:

- ☐ **Cancel claims 6-11.**
- ☐ **Replace claim 1** in its entirety with the following:

-- 1. An incoming mail monitoring system, said system comprises:

a sticker that is issued to mailers that is placed on mail to identify the mailer to whom the sticker was issued;

a receptacle that reads and stores the identifying information contained in the sticker before the mail enters the interior of the receptacle;

a data center that receives information contained in the sticker and the receptacle to determine if the mailer is permitted to enter mail into the interior of the receptacle;

a scanner that reads the sticker;

wherein the scanner captures and interprets the information contained in the sticker;

wherein the scanner is located in a control chamber;

wherein the control chamber has a locked door for isolating suspect mail;

wherein the interior of the receptacle comprises an inner chamber that receives mail from the control chamber that is not suspected of having life-harming material; and

wherein the inner chamber has a locked door in which when open mail may be removed from the inner chamber. --

Reasons For Allowance

9. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The present invention is dedicated to secure mailing. Specifically, the instant Application provides security through the use of mailer authentication and receptacles with multiple chambers. Felice et al. (US 6,789,727) teaches mail security through a receptacle sealing mechanism that seals deposited mail. Ramsden et al. (US 5,656,799) teach a

receptacle with a first chamber for receiving mail and second chamber for storing the mail. The Ramsden et al. system further teaches analyzing the mail to determine its validity by checking its physical specifications then locking an outer door to allow the mail to enter into a second chamber (figure 1813; column/line 19165-20167). The Ramsden et al. system also checks if the mail was switched on its way from the first chamber to the second chamber (figure 1813; column/line 21137-22110). Initially, the prior art of Ramsden et al. appears to teach the Applicant's invention. However, there are several notable differences. Applicant's claimed invention closes *"the slot when the mail in the control chamber is determined as suspect mail"* thereby trapping the mail in the control chamber. This differs from Ramsden et al. who teach an opposing method, one where a door is locked when the package has been accepted for mailing ('799, column 21, lines 60-67). Further, Ramsden et al. use cameras and the like to determine the validity of a package, that is to say package validation occurs within the receptacle (column/line 21137-22/10). Therefore, Ramsden et al. teach away from using modern means *for determining whether the entered mail is suspected of having life-harming material* as such a modification would result in inefficient package processing as all of the data resides within the receptacle. Email filter systems (McCormick et al.- US 6,023,723 and Cotton-US 6,330,590) do not teach the structure of the Applicant's claimed receptacle. And none of the sighted prior art teach *determining whether the entered mail is suspected of having life-harming material*. Therefore, the prior art singly, or in combination do not teach the present invention.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:
- Van Till et al. teach a secure system for accessing unattended storage.
 - Gil et al. an automated self-service mail processing and storing system.
 - Business Wire. "ID Mail Systems to Develop Mail Profiling System for In-Bound Mail Centers Against Potential Threatening Mail" 18 October 2001. Retrieved from IDS.
 - "Mail rooms on Front Lines in Bioterrorism Fight" The Wall Street Journal. 15 October 2001. Retrieved from IDS.
 - Skrotzki discloses a "paper receptacle for collecting and disposing fliers and other unwanted mail pieces, has releasing unit provided at bottom of housing, and operated to lead housing contents into recyclable paper collection bin."
11. Any comments considered necessary by Applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to **James A. Reagan** whose telephone number is **571.272.6710**. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:30am-5:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, **James Trammell** can be reached at **571.272.6712**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at **866.217.9197** (toll-free).

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

703.305.7687 [Official communications, After Final communications labeled "Box AF"]

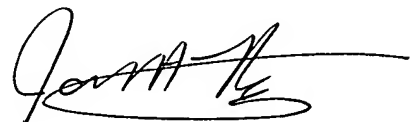
703.308.1396 [Informal/Draft communications, labeled "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to the **United States Patent and Trademark Office Customer Service Window:**

Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314.

JAR

03 May 2005

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'James A. Reagan', with a stylized flourish at the end.